

Thursday October 23rd 2025. 16.00-17.00**Unisanté, Building Proline, Room Baker**

Route de la Corniche 10, 1010 Lausanne, station Vennes

The Health Burden of Job Strain: Evidence from Europe

SPEAKER

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of occupational stressors and tasks throughout an individual's career on health in older age. Leveraging comprehensive job occupation data from the SHARE dataset, we establish precise connections between stressors and specific jobs at the 4-digit ISCO code level. To ensure accurate measurement of physical exertion, we propose the use of Metabolic Equivalent of Task (MET), based on the metabolic rate consumption associated with each task. We provide compelling evidence that individuals, especially women, engaged in physically demanding jobs experience significantly worse health in older age. These results remain valid after several robustness checks and controlling for a rich set of variables. We also introduce a novel LASSO-based approach to identify harmful tasks and measure overall Job Strain Intensity, incorporating unobserved occupational stressors. This allows us to pinpoint specific harmful tasks and ISCO codes, offering insights for targeted retirement schemes and fairness in statutory retirement ages. Policymakers can use our findings to foster healthier work environments and guide investments in automating high-risk tasks, improving workplace safety and well-being.